

# Lawmaker to Compile FOI Statutes and Opinions

By HENRY C. MACARTHUR

SACRAMENTO — (CNS) — A move to eliminate some of the confusion and frequent misunderstandings that exist with relation to the Freedom of Information laws in the California statutes will begin within a short time, according to Assemblyman William T. Bagley, R-San Rafael.

The Marin lawmaker, whose measures during the past few years, have contributed to the advancement of making the

state's laws and records, as well as public meetings, open to the public, said a comprehensive book, which will outline all California law, attorney general opinions and court decisions pertaining to freedom of information, will be written and made available to the public.

Bagley and Judd Clark, committee consultant, will author the book with the aid of the attorney general's office and probably the legislative counsel.

In addition to state laws and

interpretations, the books also will contain information on federal laws passed by the Congress at the instigation of Congressman John E. Moss, D-Sacramento, Bagley said.

State law on the subject is divided into three parts, Bagley said. First is the Brown act, which requires open meetings at the local levels of government.

Second is the open records measure, requiring matters of public record, with certain exceptions, be open to perusal by the public.

Third, an omnibus measure authored by Bagley last year, covers open meetings by state departments, boards, and commissions.

Some changes will be sought at the 1969 legislative session, Bagley said, in order to pinpoint phases of the law as it exists and clear up misunderstandings as to what is, and what is not, either an open meeting or an open public record. Some exceptions which now cause confusion, are expected to be eliminated.

Generally, he said, public officials accept the open meeting and open record laws, but there are instances which need correction by legislation.

When the book is published, it will be available to state officials, local government officials, newspapers, and other communications media. The book is expected to clear up many points which still are questioned by some public officials who hold to the old theory that the public is not entitled to knowledge per-

taining to the activities of their elected and appointed officials.

Bagley also says that during the 1969 session, he intends to reactivate the advisory commission on freedom of information, which held hearings last year on the subject of legislation necessary to advance still further the process of making the business of government the business of the people of the state.

All of which means that the job of assuring the public that it is entitled to information concerning government is not yet

completed. In fact, it appears to be a job that never will be finished once and for all, as no matter how many laws are passed, it has been the procedure since the first activity along this line which started with the Brown Act some 20 years ago, for public officials in certain quarters to attempt circumventions to avoid the intent of the legislation.

But, the continuing efforts of the legislators to maintain that intent, makes circumvention harder all the time.

## One Thing I Envy You, Dick

A CONGRESS, WITHOUT WAYNE MORSE!



ROYCE BRIER

## A Revolutionary Dies Amid Puzzling Esteem

The death at 84 of Norman Thomas, the perennial socialist, reminds you of a question rattling in your head for many a year — how did this revolutionary so long succeed in retaining the esteem of most of the society whose order he would overthrow, where so many of similar aim have failed?

The answer may be character. Not the character we ordinarily associate with morality, but character pertaining to the human relation, fair dealing with, an understanding of, his fellow men.

Mr. Thomas was what in a simpler time we used to call a

“radical.” He opposed the capitalist system of society, and he would fundamentally alter it, socially, politically and economically. He would redistribute the wealth, an age-old dream.

But he would do this peacefully, by a vote of the majority

### Opinions on Affairs of the World

of the citizenry or, as he said, “democratically.” This brought him in lifelong conflict with Marxists, or Communists, so-called, everywhere, and they despised him for it and held him to be a traitor to the proletariat they acclaimed.

But this does not account in large part for the charity exhibited by the overwhelming majority of the Americans toward Thomas.

He was monotonously unsuccessful in six presidential campaigns, at his peak received less than one million votes. Yet he drew large crowds, not all socialists, in his campaign appearances, and was usually received respectfully.

Many of the reforms he advocated in the national life as a sort of gradual revolution, were rejected by the people as impractical or wrong-headed when advocated, but were subsequently adopted by the major parties, and have since become an accepted part of the American socio-political system. Communists had no substantial part in this change. It was a delayed triumph for Mr. Thomas, or rather, for his rational attitude.

Thomas thus became an institution dedicated to dissent, but it was a dissent quite different from what we call dissent today. It was not juvenile or specious or unreasoning, but related to a steady pressure for change.

First, it was amiable, which is anathema to communists,

and far removed from the current dissent of youth.

Still, the character trait which most isolated Thomas from the revolutionary spirit of our time was honesty and tolerance. He did not believe with Lenin that the end justified the means. He did not believe in treachery, lying, or hypocrisy in pursuit of his cause, and he did not believe that all who disagreed with him were villainous or stupid.

Revolutionary thought, as developed by Lenin from Marxist teaching, and since slavishly followed by most communists, including Mao, is that the opponent is depraved, and must be destroyed whenever possible. If a colleague changes his view he is less than a dog, and no ethical factor should interfere with his destruction. This is essentially an exercise in demagoguery, and Josef Stalin was its chief practitioner in our century.

Norman Thomas wholly denied this prescribed way of revolution. The American people gradually perceived it, and so Mr. Thomas, their foremost dissenter, died honored instead of reviled.

## Morning Report

Though it cannot be said he planned it that way, it now looks as if President Johnson's last year in office will show a \$5,000,000,000 surplus. This will be his parting salute to Mr. Nixon and a nastier cut is hard to imagine.

Even for the Government to end one buck in the black is unusual. Last year LBJ racked up a deficit of better than \$25 billion.

For the news cameras Mr. Johnson has been all smiles for his successor. Even poured him a glass of sherry at a White House lunch. But leaving him a surplus—even though modest by Federal standards—is a terrible threat to the incoming President. What if he doesn't do as well, All I can say if you have a politician as a friend, you don't need an enemy.

Abe Mellinkoff

## HERB CAEN SAYS:

## Slithering Las Vegas Is Like a Pregnant Python.

I find myself alternately fascinated and repelled by Las Vegas, the great multi-colored neon snake, slithering across the Southern Nevada desert; it grows fatter each year, like a pregnant python.

Still, it is truly unique in all the world, and it is futile to make judgments about it. In Las Vegas, I feel like an astronaut of inner space, floating weightless in a sea of unreality, but as for the values, they seem fairly obvious: if you break even, you're ahead.

At this point, in fairness to the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, it should be noted that I'm talking about the section called “The Strip.” Las Vegas proper is, of course, a city of homes, parks, churches and schools, very much like any other that has a billion-dollar gaming industry on its outskirts. I once wrote that Las Vegas is where you can get married in a plastic church next to a gambling casino that will lay you 8-1 that the marriage won't last two months, and the Chamber was offended, demanding that I identify the church. So much for whimsy, but I'm still sure I could make the bet. And lose it.

The hard fact about Vegas is that it's a tremendous success, wash each weekend with pleasure-seekers and fortune-hunters who appear strangely joyless. It's like that ancient defi-

inition of Miami Beach: a place where you can have a good time without enjoying yourself. Nevertheless, for the nine-to-five working stiff, and that's most of us, there's the attraction of escape from humdrum into an upside-down world where nothing ever closes, time stands still and money is

### Report From Our Man In San Francisco

merely a commodity, like cans of soup. The most sanctified names in showbiz are all there. Unless you don't mind standing in line for hours, getting a table to see their shows is a neater trick than hitting the Hard Eight, but the masochists (customers) still outnumber the sadists (head waiters).

Maybe it's the gambling that makes Las Vegas so humorless, for there is nothing funny about losing your shirt, even if you ARE a masochist. Eyes are cold, smiles in short supply. The comedians tell assembly line jokes and the audiences laugh mechanically.

The bosses are grim for good reason: they have millions on the line every night, and even though the odds favor them, they can get hurt. Plenty. For instance, the owners of Caesar's Palace — nice, serious, generous men — don't seem to realize what they have: one of the most priceless examples of High Camp in the whole world, high enough to give Sir Ed-

mund Hillary a nosebleed. The place looks like it was put together by Busby Berkeley on a binge, but they play it absolutely straight. “Look, real marble in those pillars.” Julius Caesar is an elevator starter! It's gassier than Chevron Island, but you shouldn't laugh at it, fella.

En Garde, campus militants! The esteemed Dr. Hayakawa is taking fencing lessons at an academy on Polk, with time outs for a short beer in the German restaurant below . . . Among the first-nighters at ACT's “Flea in Her Ear” at the Geary Tuesday night: State Transportation Chief Gordon Luce, said to be Gov. Reagan's choice as Bob Finch's replacement . . . Bishop Jim Pike and his attractive bride, Diane Kennedy, will be off shortly to the Holy Land to continue work on a three-volume book about Christ — the first of which is already headed for the movies . . . If you'd like to own the ‘53 Bentley Continental first purchased by Aristotle Onassis, it's on sale (\$10,500) at Dennis Balchin's in San Lorenzo. Most recent owner: TV's Jim Dunbar, who has the papers attesting to Onassis' purchase (“I have sat in the seats of the mighty”) . . . Mike Ranney just rec'd his '69 telephone credit card, with instructions that state: “Card should be signed personally.” Being a non-conformist, he's trying to figure out some other way of signing it, but he's stumped.

## SACRAMENTO REPORT

## Agenda for Legislators: Schools, Budgets, Smut

By RALPH C. DILLS  
Senator, 32nd District

When we arrived in Sacramento early this week for the opening of the 1969 legislative session, we were aware that in the months ahead we would have to cope with new and tough problems which only a growing and changing state can produce.

And the legislative issues this year appear more demanding than usual. Let's take a look at what some of the major issues will cover:

Cost of higher education: The legislature has been asked to provide more money for our university and state colleges. As you know, the people turned down a bond issue to finance construction for these in-

stitutions, and the college heads say they might have to limit enrollment unless additional funds are forthcoming.

Campus turmoil: Many “get tough” issues will be proposed in this field by the legislature who sense the feeling of a majority of their constituents. Included among these will be bills to limit guarantees of faculty tenure in order to oust faculty members believed to be encouraging student militants.

Judicial appointments: The governor seems determined to again push his controversial judicial selection plan, designed to give the State Bar a greater voice in selecting judges.

Pornography: Efforts to write tougher anti-smut laws have floundered in a lower house committee. It may be that a change in committee personnel, due to change in leadership in the assembly, could bring out a bill to put more controls on pornography.

Tax reform: Recommendations by a special committee appointed by the governor are likely to provide the impetus which may result in action. And several of my colleagues have indicated they will have bills ready for introduction which may shift taxes to provide property tax relief for harassed taxpayers.

Medi-Cal abuses: Illegal and unethical practices by health care providers which has been costing the state about \$8 million annually, may be reduced, if not eliminated, under legisla-

tive proposals to provide safeguards against these abuses.

School finance: A bill is expected to be introduced to establish a statewide property tax to equalize financial support for local school districts.

Drunks: A bill to eliminate public drunkenness as a crime is expected to come from some liberals in the legislature. Such a measure would require that drunkenness be treated as a health problem, not as a criminal problem.

Other problems possibly heading for our agenda include those from special interest groups, such as the California Labor Federation (AFL-CIO) which will ask for increases in workmen's compensation and other benefits for its membership.

Additional subjects of importance to be considered will include rapid transit, traffic safety, self-help housing, narcotics, the state budget, education, conservation of natural resources, and a myriad of other items.

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## Your Right to Know Is the Key to All Your Liberties Comment and Opinion

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## A Bulging Slate

If all the potential candidates go ahead with their announced intentions, Mayor Sam Yorty will find himself facing 21 challengers when the Los Angeles voters go to the polls in the spring.

For those of us in the cities of Carson and Torrance, it should be a spectacular show as Congressmen, Councilmen, ex-commissioners, models, television personalities, and assorted Southland characters take out after Sam. For those of us who live in Wilmington, San Pedro, or the Shoestring Strip, it means deciding on our favorite from among those in the field.

Residents in the western parts of Torrance may have more than passing interest in the race. Congressman Alphonzo Bell, who represents the 28th District, is given early notice as a strong candidate. His election would mean a special election for his Congressional seat.

Another Congressman, Thomas Rees, is in the race along with television personalities Jack Rourke and Baxter Ward. Art Whizin, former Chili Bowl king, has filed intentions to run as has Sax Elliot, the inventive college professor who once put his basketball players on thick sponge-soled shoes and set the referee in a cage over the floor to call the game.

If the past performances of some of the entrants and their known affinity for splashy approaches to projects can be taken as an indication, the upcoming mayoralty race in Los Angeles should go down as one of the spectacles of 1969. We're going to be watching with interest.

## Disarmed Police

There is an eerie as well as dangerous quality to the decision of the Washington, D.C., City Council which forbids policemen to shoot at looters, at fleeing suspects, or at moving cars, even banning warning shots fired into the air.

The exception is if a life is in danger. Washington, of course, is one of the most crime-ridden municipalities in the United States of America. A policeman's life is probably always in danger there, as well as the lives of those who dare to go out in many areas after dark.

It is self-defeating and strange for a City Council under these circumstances to treat the contact between policeman and criminal as some sort of contest which requires marquis of Queensbury rules. What will be the next concession the council makes to crime — a five-year penalty for the policeman who begins to chase the criminal too soon—*Illinois State Journal*.

WILLIAM HOGAN

## Not All Moon Lore Due To Mission of Apollo 8

Moon Lore: I have been studying the “moon most favorable” column of my favorite annual, “The Old Farmer’s (1969) Almanac,” said to be the 117th edition, published at Dublin, N.H., and giving weather forecasts throughout the year for all of the U.S.A., planting table, zodiac secrets, recipes, anecdotes and pleasantries, puzzles and charades, etc., etc., including advice on when you should plant vegetables and flowers based on the light and dark of the moon.

The best time to plant things which bear crops above ground is during the “light,” that is between the day the moon is new to the day it is full. Plants which bear crops below ground should be put in during the “dark,” or from the day after it is full to the day before it is new again. Other moon adages in this year's Old Farmer's:

Virgo or Scorpio, and in good aspect with Saturn.  
Wear a colt only when moon is in Capricorn, Aquarius, or Pisces. Nails and hair grow

### Browsing Through the World of Books

faster if cut during the light of the moon.

If the horns of the moon be sharp on the third day, the whole month will be fine. If upper horn of the Moon is dusky at setting, it will rain during the wane of that moon.

Chestnut or black ash timber for fence rails is four times better if cut in the last quarter of the moon (February or March) than in the first quarter. Hemlock burns better if cut in the last quarter.

The ancients advised felling timber within four days after the new moon. Pliny said to do it on the shortest day of the year.

Wine made during two

moons is not good; moonlight promotes putrefaction.

To the weather-wise: M. Toalda of Padua (circa 1720) asserted that the weather changes most often (85.8 per cent of the time) when the new moon comes in. Many blossoms on plum trees in the spring, heavy fruit crops in the fall, oak and other leaves remaining on trees in December indicate a severe winter is coming up. The thickness of fall fur on most animals, goose bones, distance between caterpillar stripes are also winter predictors.

When hornets build nests high off the ground, expect deep snows. Bees, ants and spiders are useful as short-term predictors. Nature, on the whole, however, is not easily understood and birds and animals, who should know, are often misled by her, as is mankind.